Dr. *PRAT's*

SERMON,

Preached before the

Honourable SOCIETY

OF THE

County of *KENT*,

Novemb. 23. 1697.

Martis, **xxx** *die Novemb.* 1697.

IT is Ordered at a General Meeting of the Stewards for the Society of the County of *Kent*, That their hearty Thanks be given to Dr. *Prat*, for his Sermon Preached on the 23d. inſtant, at St. *Mary le Bow*; and that He be deſired to Print the ſame.

John Cooke, Treaſurer.

Peace and Gratitude.

A

SERMON,

Preached before the

Honourable SOCIETY

Of the NATIVES of the

County of *KENT*,

Novemb. 23. 1697.

At St. *Mary le Bow*, *London.*

By *Samuel Prat*, D. D. Chaplain to His Highneſs, *William* Duke of *Glocester.*

LONDON,

Printed by J. Dawks, for John Back, (Bookſeller to the ſaid Honourable Society,) at the *Black-Boy* on *London-Bridge*, 1697.

To my Worthy Friends,

Capt. *William Wright.*	Mr. *John Cooke.*
Mr. *William Rolph.*	Mr. *Tho. Gibbs.*
Mr. *Henry Hene.*	Mr. *Tho. Biſhop.*
Mr. *Thomas Staples.*	Mr. *Ja. Almond.*
Mr. *Edward Simmons.*	Capt. *Geo. Weller.*
Mr. *Sarles Goatly.*	Mr. *Henry Shers.*

STEWARDS,

For the Honourable *Society* of the Natives of the County of *KENT.*

GENTLEMEN,

IT *was not want of Love or Reſpect to your Honourable* Society, *that made me ſo unwilling to* Preach *before you; but having very little time at my own diſpoſal, and knowing how many Learn'd and Eloquent Divines now reſiding in the* County, *had better opportunities*

tunities of performing that Duty, I was loth you ſhould be involv'd in a diſcredit, which my incapacity at ſo ſhort a warning, muſt needs bring upon my ſelf. And the ſame reaſon made me reſolv'd againſt Publiſhing *this Incorrect Diſcourſe.*

It will eaſily be granted, that the other great and Sacred Charge *in which I have the Honour to ſerve, will anſwer for me to all the World, if I don't ſhine very bright in the* Gift of Preaching; *I ſhould I hope give a tollerable account of my ſelf, if at preſent I ſhould hide a great part of that Talent, which at the ſame time I have a ſecret deſire (as all Lawfully Ordain'd Miniſters ought to have) of improving.*

I muſt confeſs withal 'tis my Opinion, that the Advancement of Reputation with the beſt Judges gotten by this way of Printing Sermons, has of late Years ſcarce compenſated for the trouble; while the greateſt number of Readers ſeek rather to exerciſe *their own parts, than to* add *to 'em.*

They

They are not ſo ſevere upon the Preacher, *as they are upon the* Publiſher, *and therefore ſeeing Men are willing to* Forgive, *what they are too ready to* Forget, *I think that the* Miniſters *of the* Church of England, *ſhould content themſelves with being generally reputed the beſt Preachers in the World, without giving any body the trouble of Reviſing their Performances: At leſt till any other Church can equal the ſmalleſt part of what in this kind has hitherto been extant. So that I had much rather you would have been prevail'd upon to excuſe the* omitting *this, of which I fear, I ſhall never forgive my ſelf the* doing.

All that I can ſay for my ſelf is, that I ought not to decline any opportunity of ſhewing my Reſpect to the County, *for had I no other Obligations to it than the generous Friendſhip I have met with in the* Noble Family *at* Eaſtwell, *I ſhould think all my ſpare Hours very well employ'd in expreſſing my Gratitude.*

Therefore it is no wonder, Gentlemen, if the warmth of your importunities, contrary to my

my own Judgment and Reſolutions, has made me to expoſe my ſelf at this time to Cenſure; and particularly of thoſe Men, who have a low eſteem for every thing that is not elaborate and polite.

And I have ſtill ſome hopes, that I ſhall buoy my ſelf up; when I put into the Scale of my Apologie, *the great Civilities that I have received from* you *in your* Repreſentative Capacity, *which have for ever oblig'd me to be,*

GENTLEMEN,

Your moſt Humble,

and moſt Reſpectful Servant,

Samuel Prat.

A

SERMON

Preached at the

Kentiſh-Feaſt.

Coloſſ. III. 15.

Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to the which alſo ye are called together in one Body, and be ye thankful.

THE Apoſtle in the foregoing Verſes exhorteth us, *to Bowels of Mercies, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind, Meekneſs, and long Suffering*; that we ſhould

 forbear

forbear one another, and forgive one another. If any Man hath a quarrel againſt any, even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo alſo do ye: But above all theſe, ſaith he, (and it is indeed, the Root and Foundation of all theſe,) *put on Charity.*

Now here in the following Verſe, he recommends two other Virtues, which are inſeparable from ſuch a Chriſtian Temper of Mind, to wit, Peace one with another; and Gratitude towards God: *Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, and be ye thankful.*

As to the Firſt of theſe, Peace, we have here Three Particulars to be obſerved.

I. The Original of it, it is of God, *the Peace of God.*

II. The Property and Office of it, which is to rule and govern Mens Hearts; *Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts.*

III. The Motives or Inducements, by which the Apoſtle would perſuade us to it, are theſe Two.

In

In the First place, the Ordinance and Appointment of God, expressed in these Words, *unto which ye are called:* And, I.

Secondly, The Mutual Relation which we have one to another; being all of us Members *in one Body.* II.

First then, the *Peace of God*, (called so, because it is the Effects of God's Love in our Hearts,) hath a twofold meaning in Holy Scripture. For it signifies either, I.

That, that inward Peace, which is the Peace of a good Conscience, or that peaceable Inclination of Good-will to one another, which by all the Offices of Love and Charity, exerts its self outwardly.

The first of these is compacted between God Almighty, and the Conscience of every particular Person; upon a firm, lively, and active Faith in the Son of God, and the Promises made thro' him to Mankind, with hearty Repentance for Offences past, and firm Resolutions of Amendment for the time to come; hath a lively hope that his Sins are forgiven him, thro' the Merits of Christ,

and that his Peace and Reconciliation is made with God, as *Rom.* 5. 1. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* ſo that it is the *Peace of God*, becauſe it is the Peace which his Son procured for us; there having not been that Love and Agreement between God and Man under the Law: we were then Strangers and Aliens unto the Covenant of Grace;
Eph. 3. 13. *But now* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *ye who ſometimes were far off are made nigh, by the Blood of Chriſt, for he is our Peace.*

But that Peace which the Apoſtle ſeems chiefly to aim at in this Text, is external in its Operations; when a Habit of Love and Good-will, one towards another, diſpoſes us to all the Offices of Charity and Kindneſs, and particularly to a Sociable and Friendly Converſation: in which it is ſo much the more our Parts and Duties to be engaged, by how much we are aſſured, that God is the Author of it: for this reaſon, he is called the *God of Peace*, as in 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. *Brethren, be perfect, be of good comfort,*

fort, be of one Mind; live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you. Rom. 15. 33, 16, 20. Heb. 13. 20.

And from hence we may infer, that all thoſe who diſorder the Communion of Saints, who break the Bonds and Obligations of Peace and Unity, who diſturb that Chriſtian Fellowſhip and Harmony which we ought all to conſerve, how ſtrictly Religious ſoever they pretend to be, how oft ſoever they take the Name of God in their Mouths, yet acting directly againſt the Dictates of God's Holy Spirit, they are profeſſedly the Oppoſers of his Divine Will; *for God is not the Author of Confuſion, but of Peace, as in all Churches of the Saints.*

Secondly, Let us conſider the Property and Office of this Peace of God, that it is to *rule* in our Hearts. 1 Cor. 14. 33.

This Word *Rule* in the Text, is Metaphorical, relating to the Publick Exerciſes of the Antients, over which there were chief Officers or Judges, conſtituted to decide any Controverſy which might ariſe among the Candidates ſtriving for Victory: ſo that the Word ſignifies, to *ſuperintend* and *judge*.

Now

Now there being a continual Conflict in the Heart of Man, the virtuous Affections ſtriving againſt evil and carnal Paſſions, and the unruly Deſires uſurping upon, and inſulting over the calm and lovely Graces; Hatred and Envyings againſt Love and Joy, Strife and Emulations againſt Goodneſs and Meekneſs: Here's the Peace of God muſt moderate among 'em, and give the Palm of Victory to the moſt Peaceable; every thing that proceeds from God, having a Soveraign Authority, which is to be executed with all the Force and Vigour imaginable, for the puniſhment of the wicked Doer, and for the praiſe of them that do well.

But farther: This Phraſe, *Let it rule in your Hearts*, hath another very great, and peculiar Emphaſis.

For the better underſtanding of which, let us reduce all Mankind to four ſeveral Tempers and Diſpoſitions.

I. *Firſt*, There are thoſe to whom this Peace of God is altogether unknown, who neither poſſeſs it in their Hearts, nor ſo much as pretend to an outward ſhow of it: *Satyrs* with-

without a Metaphor, that inſult all Mankind like the *Giants* of Old, and ſtorm Heaven too with the reakings of that Hell which is always within 'em:

Theſe have no Rule and Government for their Thoughts, Words or Actions; no Governours can pleaſe, no Adminiſtration of Government oblige theſe Men; kindneſs and indulgence has but little influence upon their Reaſon, their own true Intreſt leſs, and Religion leaſt of all: Theſe are ſuch as Holy *David* had to encounter with, Wo is me ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *That I am conſtrained to dwell in* Meſech, *and to have my Habitation in the Tents of* Kedar, *my Soul hath long wiſh'd for Peace, but when I ſpeak of Peace they are for War.* Pſal. 120.5.

Theſe Men, tho' in Times of profound Peace, Live according to the Doctrine of the *Leviathan*, in a perpetual State of War; and their greateſt Quarrel of all, is againſt the very Articles of Peace, as in that great one relating to our Superiours; Duty and Allegiance is reproach'd, as time-ſerving; ſo Love and Kindneſs to our Neighbours, as Compli-

Compliance and Officiouſneſs; Temperance and Induſtry, as mean and ſervile: ſuch ſowr Thoughts and bitter Sarcaſms, is a mixture doubtleſs of Gall and Vinegar, no leſs offenſive to the Bleſſed Jeſus, than the cruel Sponge which was proferr'd him upon the Croſs. But then,

II. *Secondly*, There are ſome Men who have all the external Marks of this Chriſtian Grace we are ſpeaking of, but have not the leaſt Impreſſion of it upon their Hearts: there is an outward appearance of Peace and Friendſhip in their addreſs; they are willing to enter into Societies, to engage in Friendſhips, to renew old Amities, and promote new ones: But theſe are ſuch whited Sepulchres as the Phariſes of Old were amongſt the *Jews*; there is a Root of Bitterneſs ſtill alive, tho' as it were deep buried.

Of either of theſe two ſorts of Men, I have now mention'd, there are none I hope among us here preſent; altho', ſome of 'em crept into the primitive *Agapæ*, or Feaſts of Love; of whom St. *Peter* takes notice, as of Spots and Blemiſhes in their publick Meetings,

rity, *Sporting themſelves*, ſaith he, *with their own deceivings, while they Feaſt with you.* 2 Ep. 2. 13.

Now if we have no ſuch among us, all is well; for there can be none of this *Honourable Society* like thoſe Men, whoſe Character I am now entering upon. Altho',

The Third Rank of Men, are of ſomewhat better alloy than the former two, for they have this Peace of God in their Hearts, notwithſtanding they take very little care of manifeſting it by their outward Converſation: III.

I don't only ſpeak of ſuch Men, who neglect Opportunities of promoting Love and Charity amongſt their Neighbours.

And who abſent themſelves from ſuch Laudable Conventions as this is, whereby *Publick-ſpiritedneſs* and *Charity*, are as much amplyfied as *Unity*.

But of thoſe Perſons likewiſe, who love to manage that little good Nature they are Maſters, of by way of Paradox; People that think and mean well, and yet love to talk amiſs; unleſs it could be ſuppoſed that they ſpeak without thinking; and when the wantonneſs

of their Wit or Genius, would be loth to lye under that Cenſure:

Now both theſe ſorts of Men, tho' in ſome reſpects they may be ſaid to have the Peace of God in their Hearts, their own Conſciences not accuſing 'em of any miſchievous Deſigns, or ſo much as uncharitable Thoughts; yet the Peace of God doth not *Rule* within 'em, they receive the Spirit of God into their Hearts as a Gueſt, but not as a Governour.

And this in other reſpects is the caſe of many Men; who have not only Inclinations to *Virtuous* and *Moral* Duties, but who are likewiſe well diſpoſed to Exerciſes of *Religion*; yet for want of fixing their Reſolutions, and giving themſelves up wholely to a Spiritual Conduct, they are overcome by the Treachery of ſome unmortify'd Adverſary; ſuch as Penuriouſneſs, Peeviſhneſs, Sloth, Pride or the like; or elſe by the boiſterouſneſs of that unbridled Luſt, which under the denomination of *Wit*, is ſubſervient to all the deſigns of *Ill-nature*. But now,

The

The Fourth ſort of Men, are thoſe which I would recommend to your Example. IV.

Thoſe, which you appear to be as a *Society*, I would have you approve your ſelves in your *ſingle* and *particular* Capacities.

In whoſe Hearts the Peace of God hath not only *poſſeſſion*, but *Government*; and Exerciſes a Soveraign and Uncontroul'd Authority over all the Faculties of the Soul, and Actions of the Body.

Well then, that we may the better underſtand the Allegory, and the force of this word *Rule*, we are to ſuppoſe in the Heart of Man two contending Parties. The Spirit of *Love*, and the Spirit of *Enmity*; the one lays claim by a Lawful and Eternal right of Præeminence, and the other only by Stealth or Uſurpation.

The Spirit of Love ſets up the Peace of God, and becauſe Peace is a thing ſo univerſally deſireable; the very Spirit of Enmity ſometimes pretends to ſet up a ſort of Peace too; the Peace of *Neceſſity*, the Peace of *Worldly Intereſt*, a Politick and deſigning Peace, ſuch an one

as never comes up to that *of God, which paſſeth all Underſtanding.*

Now the words of my Text are a deciſion of the Controverſy, and give the ſole Authority to the Peace of God, it makes this the Judge and Umpire of all Occurrences: Βραβευέτω, let it *Rule*, or rather let it *give the Palm of Victory*; it is a word that alludes to the ancient Exerciſes among the *Grecians*, and Originally ſignifies, *to beſtow a Reward*: The Office of the Judge, being to beſtow a Palm or Crown upon the Victor.

And this Metaphor ſhould methinks ſilence all Pretenſions to Uncharitableneſs and Cenſorioufneſs; here is a Commiſſion only for *Approbation*, and none at all for the *Condemnation* of any one; its Office being no other, than to ſilence and over-rule all things that do not make for Peace. I proceed therefore.

III. *Thirdly*, To the Motives and Inducements, by which the Apoſtle would perſwade us to this Peace of God.

Firſt,

Firſt, The Ordinance and Appointment of God, expreſs'd in theſe words, *Unto which you are call'd.* And, I.

Secondly, The Mutual Relation which we have one to another, being all of us Members *in one Body.* II.

Firſt, Then this Chriſtan Peace is one of the chief Articles of the New Covenant between God and Man, which our Saviour himſelf by his own Example did confirm: I.

The pleaſant Fruits of Peace, *Love* and *Joy*, for inſtance, he did in the earlieſt days of his Prophetic Office in a very extraordinary manner encourage; Witneſs the firſt Miracle he did in *Cana* of *Galilee*, by changing at a great Feaſt of Love, ſo much Water into Wine: Which was a plain Argument, that he came not to introduce a ſullen, ſowre, moroſe Affectation of Religion; but ſo far as might conduce with Charity and Temperance, he indulged his Proſelyes to Innocent Mirth: and ſo much more than the commonly ſuppoſs'd neceſſary Refections of Nature, that the envious *Cynicks* and meagre *Puritans* cenſur'd him, as a Glutton, and

and a Wine-bibber; adding to his Charge his Eating with Publicans and Sinners, whilſt his Accuſers were in the mean time *Devouring Widows Houſes.*

The *Examples* of Peace, Love and Unity, which our Saviour ſet the World, are evident, and no leſs ſo are his *Precepts*; as in the ninth of St. *Mark*, at the fiftieth Verſe, *Have Salt in your ſelves*, [that Wiſdom and Prudence, which ſeaſons every Feaſt of Love] *and have Peace one with another.* St. *Paul* likewiſe in the twelfth to the *Romans*, ſeventeenth Verſe, *If it be poſſible, as much as lies in you, live Peaceably with all Men*; ſo Chap. 14. verſ. 19. *Let us follow after the things which make for Peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

And then I muſt needs infer, That if our Aſſembling our ſelves here together this day, after this manner, be a thing that makes for Peace and Amity? why it ſeems we have a proper Call to it, and I don't ſee how any one can without good Reaſons excuſe his abſence.

Corre-

Correſpondent hereto we find the Beginings of Chriſtianity, as in the fourth of the *Acts*, 32 verſ. we read, that *the Multitude of them which believed, were of one Heart, and of one Soul.*

They had Societies, and Feaſts of Love, wherein there was conſtantly a Communication of outward things to thoſe that were in want; and which join'd together with Meekneſs, and Forgiveneſs of Injuries, was indeed a *walking worthy of the Vocation where-with they were call'd.* Eph. 4. 1.

Now by how much we come ſhort of theſe things, by ſo much we are fallen off from *Primitive Chriſtianity*, by ſo much we are unmindful of our Calling; for thoſe whom God Almighty hath call'd into his Church, are by him commanded to Live as Bretheren, and *Heirs* together of *the ſame Promiſe*; and this is

II. The ſecond Motive, to wit, the mutual Relation which we have one to another, by being all of us Members of one Body. *To the which alſo ye are call'd together, in one Body.*

Among

Among all the ſeveral ſorts of Societies in the World, Societies of *Conſanguinity* or *Affinity*, Societies of *Policy* or Civil Government, Societies of *Places*, Societies of *Profeſſion*, and Societies of pure *Friendſhip*; that which Superſedes all, nay rather Bleſſes and Sanctifies all, is *Eccleſiaſtical* Society; which every Chriſtian at his Baptiſm hath entered himſelf into, and engaged to obſerve the Heavenly Oeconomy thereof; each Chriſtian being but a ſeveral Part of that one Body, of which Jeſus Chriſt is the Head;

Rom. 12.4. *For as we have members in one body, and all members have not the ſame Office, ſo we being many, are one body in Chriſt, and every one members one of another.*

We have to the like purpoſe, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. *For, as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, ſo alſo is Chriſt.* And then it follows, verſ. 25. *God hath ſo ordered, that there ſhould be no Schiſm in the body; but that the members ſhould have the ſame care one for another; and whether one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it; or one*

one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoyce with it.

Thus much concerning the *Peace of God.* I come now to ſpeak more briefly of this other Chriſtian Virtue *Gratitude*, expreſs'd in theſe words, *Be ye thankful.* By which we are to underſtand, a Religious and thankful acknowledgment of the Benefits which we receive by the diſpenſation of the Goſpel.

The Comforts of an Holy Fellowſhip here, and the Promiſes of Eternal Life hereafter, are tender'd to us upon ſuch Conditions, which are in themſelves ſo eaſy to be obſerved, and ſo much our Natural Duty to perform, that they can never be ſaid to merit or deſerve any thing at God's Hand. So that all the Good and Charitable Works we are capable of doing, are but ſo many acknowledgments by way of *Gratitude*, for what we are never able to purchaſe, but has been freely offer'd by the bounty of God. All returns therefore which are under *Valuation* of the thing received, can be upon no other account, but of *Gratitude.*

Our Duty and Obedience to our Superiours, our Love and Friendſhip to one another, our Charity and Liberality to the Poor and Needy, are but ſo many returns of *Gratitude* to *God*; for the Comforts and Protection of Government, for the happineſs of a Chriſtian Neighbourhood, for making us Members of Chriſt's Holy Body, and the Entitling us to the Inheritance of an Heavenly *Canaan*.

A Senſe of *Gratitude* therefore, ſhould have a powerful Influence upon us in the whole courſe of our Lives.

In our Duty to *God*, by doing him all the Duties of Faithful *Servants* in his Holy *Family*; and above all, expreſſing continual Thanks to him, for Suſtaining us by his Word and Power, and placing us in a Society, whoſe reciprocal Obligations are *Love* and *Peace*.

In our Duty to our *Neighbours*, by all the Holy Offices of *Love*, *Joy*, *Peace*, *Long-ſuffering*, *Goodneſs*, *Meekneſs*, *Patience* and the like; conſidering one another as the Image of God, as the purchaſe of our Bleſ-

ſed

ſed Saviour's Blood, and as Coheirs of the Heavenly promiſes.

In our Duty towards our *ſelves*, by Living in *Temperance*, *Soberneſs* and *Chaſtity*, as thoſe that have poſſeſs'd their Souls with an hope of Eternal things, that exceeding weight of Glory, which is laid up for us in Heaven. And then with a Prudent concern for publick good, let our own Intereſt prompt us to *Peace* and *Unity*.

Let us remember that it was *Faction* and *Rebellion*, which threw ſome *Angels* out of Heaven, and that 'tis *Concord* and *Obedience* which muſt bring us into their forfeited Places; that 'tis impoſſible we ſhould ever be eſtabliſh'd in *Peace*, unleſs we are Link'd and United together in the Bonds of *Love* and *Charity*, For *as the Humane Spirit*, ſaith St. *Auſtin*, *can never animate the Members of the Body, unleſs they are join'd, or united together; ſo the Holy Spirit of God doth never animate the Members of the Church, unleſs they are likewiſe united in Peace and Goodwill.* De Civitat. Dei.

But above all, let a Senſe of *Gratitude* towards God, oblige us to this Duty of *publick Peace* and *Concord*; ſince he has been ſo graciouſly pleaſed to diſperſe the dangers of a Foreign Enemy, when he might have given us over as a Prey unto 'em: Let us take heed that we fall into no Enmities at home, and ſo become a Prey one to another: Let the tenderneſs that God hath ſhewed to us, not only *teach*, but by all the Obligations of Love and Gratitude *operate* ſo upon us, as to be much more tender of the *publick*, than of our *private* concerns.

Let us take heed that we ſleight not the *late* inſtances of his Mercy, but unite our Hearts and Affections to one another, by that (among other Conſiderations) of our late dangers of falling into *Miſery* or *Captivity*; and let us be *ſpeedy* in ſuch returns of Gratitude, leſt miſchiefs worſe than thoſe we fear put it out of our *Capacity*, or a greater ſecurity out of our *Thoughts*: *You* ſure to whom I addreſs my ſelf, have the greateſt reaſon of any *Tribe* or *County* of this Nation, becauſe you lye moſt expos'd to Foreign

reign Invaſions, or to any other Inſults of an enrag'd Enemy: You were within hearing of the Alarm of War, and the neareſt to Outrage, had we been overthrown.

You would never more have boaſted that you are the only People of *England* that never were Conquer'd; for then you would in all probability have been the firſt; you would have found ſomething more formidable than the Arms of *Julius Cæſar*, or even of the *Norman Conqueror*, tho' they carried ſuch a terror along with 'em, as made the Heart and Spirits as it were of the whole Nation, to retire into your *invincible* Corner of it.

You would no more have retain'd your ancient Liberties; thoſe I mean, which your Anceſtors had Reſcued by unexampled Courage and Conduct out of a general Deflagration.

All the *Riches*, and *Honours*, and *Beauties*, in which you excel other *Counties*, had made your Captivity or Baniſhment, but the more inſupportable. Then in ſuch a Caſe,

Virg. Ecl. 1. *Nos Patriæ fines, & dulcia linquimus Arva,*

Sub tegmine Fagi Invicti. had been the ſad *Palinode* to your pretty *Motto.*

But inſtead of that, you were the firſt People that were now lately Bleſſed with the return of our *Triumphant Monarch.*

The firſt that ſtrow'd your *Ave's* under the *Beautiful Feet* of him that *brought Peace.*

And what returns of Gratitude can you make to *God* and the *King*, but by poſſeſſing your Souls with the *Peace of God*, with ſuch a Peaceable diſpoſition as becomes good Chriſtians, and good Subjects? letting it *rule in your Hearts, to the which alſo ye are call'd together* this day, as it were in *one Body.*

You are call'd together not only to the *Feſtivity*, but to the *Duties* of the Day. And it is *my* Duty to put you in mind, that ſeeing you now meet together with greater cauſes of *Joy*, and greater marks of *Proſperity* than ever, that you now make greater returns than ever of *Gratitude* to God.

How

How many *Illuſtrious*, how many *Prudent*, how many *Wealthy*, how many *Active* Men will meet this day together! with what Mercies received, with what Abilities attain'd, with what Opportunities of doing good, will they come laden! and will ſome little uſual or ordinary offering of Praiſe ſerve turn; will the doing that, be an acceptable Sacrifice from ſo potent a *Society* which is not above the Ability of *one Man*?

Your *County* indeed can vie in *publick* Works of Charity with any in the Nation, not only of the *Deceaſed* but of *Living* Benefactors too. But theſe *publick* Works which are the Gifts of *private* Men, ſhould much more excite you methinks now in a *publick* Capacity, to the doing more works of Charity, than ever any Body of Men hath yet done for the Relief of *private Neceſſities*.

I am afraid, leſt you ſhould degenerate from the Character of your *Anceſtors*; they almoſt 2000 Years ago were reputed to Cæſ. have

have had the greateſt Humanity of any People in the World, and if the *Humanity* of *Gentiles* exceed the *Charity* of *Chriſtians*; then as to your parts it is, as if *Chriſt had Dy'd in vain*; and tho' you were probably the *firſt Chriſtians* of this *Iſle*, yet *your faith hath been in vain.*

No: *Let every Man do* indeed *according as he is diſpoſed in his Heart*; but he that doth moſt to the Glory of God, will feel the *Peace of God* in a good Conſcience here, and everlaſting Peace, Tranquillity, Joy and Pleaſure hereafter.

2 Cor. 13. 11. *Wherefore Brethren, be perfect, be of one Mind, live in peace; and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you.* Amen.

FINIS.